

BUILDING YOUR CAREER AS A LICENSED CONTRACTOR

IT'S THE LAW — Any construction project priced at \$500 or more in labor and materials must be done by a contractor licensed in the trade or occupation of the work.



What kind of experience is required?

At least four years of journey-level experience is required to qualify for the exam. Credit is given for experience as a journeyman, foreman, supervising employee, contractor, or owner-builder.

Is school necessary?

There are no educational requirements to qualify for a contractor's license. You may receive credit for technical training, apprenticeship training, or education instead of a portion of the required four years of practical experience. At least one year must be practical experience.

Is there an examination requirement for a contractor's license?

Yes, the qualifying individual for a contractor's license is required to pass written law and trade examinations, unless he or she meets the requirements for a waiver. An examination notice will be sent at least three weeks prior to the examination date.

Are there any financial requirements to qualify for a contractor's license?

Yes. All applicants, other than those applying for a joint venture license, must have more than \$2,500 worth of operating capital. Also, a contractor's bond or cash deposit in the amount of \$12,500 is required. The CSLB does not issue bonds.

What are the other requirements?

All applicants must be fingerprinted and undergo a criminal background check before a license is issued at an additional cost to the applicant.

For more detailed information on becoming a California licensed contractor, see the CSLB publication, *Blueprint for Becoming a California Licensed Contractor* or visit our Website, www.cslb.ca.gov.



CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD
P.O. Box 26000
Sacramento, CA 95826-0026
1-800-321-CSLB (2752)
www.cslb.ca.gov

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

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Answers to questions about....

What are the contractor's license classifications?

The CSLB issues a license to contract in a particular trade or field of the construction profession. Each separate trade is recognized as a "classification." You may add as many classifications to your license for which you qualify. The CSLB issues licenses for the following classifications:

CLASS A—GENERAL ENGINEERING CONTRACTOR

The principal business is in connection with fixed works requiring specialized engineering knowledge and skill.

CLASS B—GENERAL BUILDING CONTRACTOR

The principal business is in connection with any structure built, being built, or to be built, requiring in its construction the use of at least two unrelated building trades or crafts; however, framing or carpentry projects may be performed without limitation. In some instances, a general building contractor may take a contract for projects involving one trade only if the general contractor holds the appropriate specialty license or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed specialty contractor to perform the work.

CLASS C—SPECIALTY CONTRACTOR

At right are the 41 separate "C" classifications for contractors whose construction work requires special skills and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts. Manufacturers are considered to be contractors if engaged in on-site construction, alteration, repair, or installation.

CLASSIFICATION CODE

BOILER, HOT WATER HEATING AND STEAM FITTING	C-4
BUILDING MOVING AND DEMOLITION	C-21
CABINET, MILLWORK AND FINISH CARPENTRY	C-6
CONCRETE	C-8
CONSTRUCTION ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	C-31
DRYWALL	C-9
EARTHWORK AND PAVING	C-12
ELECTRICAL (GENERAL)	C-10
ELECTRICAL SIGNS	C-45
ELEVATOR	C-11
FENCING	C-13
FIRE PROTECTION	C-16
FLOORING AND FLOOR COVERING	C-15
FRAMING AND ROUGH CARPENTRY	C-5
GENERAL MANUFACTURED HOUSING	C-47
GLAZING	C-17
INSULATION AND ACOUSTICAL	C-2
LANDSCAPING	C-27
LATHING AND PLASTERING	C-35
LIMITED SPECIALTY	C-61
LOCK AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT	C-28
LOW VOLTAGE SYSTEMS	C-7
MASONRY	C-29
ORNAMENTAL METALS	C-23
PAINTING AND DECORATING	C-33
PARKING AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT	C-32
PIPELINE	C-34
PLUMBING	C-36
REFRIGERATION	C-38
ROOFING	C-39
SANITATION SYSTEM	C-42
SHEET METAL	C-43
SOLAR	C-46
STEEL, REINFORCING	C-50
STEEL, STRUCTURAL	C-51
SWIMMING POOL	C-53
TILE (CERAMIC & MOSAIC)	C-54
WARM-AIR HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR CONDITIONING	C-20
WATER CONDITIONING	C-55
WELDING	C-60
WELL-DRILLING (WATER)	C-57

Who can become a licensed contractor?

A licensed contractor must be 18 years of age or older and have the experience and skills necessary to manage daily activities of a construction business, including field supervision, or be represented by a qualifying individual with the necessary experience and skills.

Who must be licensed as a contractor?

All businesses or individuals who construct or alter any building, highway, road, parking facility, railroad, excavation, or other structure in California must be licensed by the California Contractors State License Board if the total cost (labor and materials) of one or more contracts on the project is \$500 or more. Contractors must be licensed before submitting bids.

Is workers' compensation insurance required?

All contractors who have employees are required to present proof of workers' compensation insurance coverage. Contractors who do not have employees working for them will be required to file a certificate of exemption. The one exception is roofing contractors (C-39) who are required to have proof of workers' compensation coverage.

How much does a license cost?

In addition to the financial requirements that must be met, it costs \$250 for an original application fee (nonrefundable) and \$150 for the initial license fee for one classification. The license must be renewed every two years. Currently, the renewal fee is \$300.

How can I apply?

The *Application for Original Contractor's License* is available at any office of the Contractors State License Board. It is also possible to order or download an application form from our Website, www.cslb.ca.gov, call the CSLB's 24-hour automated information line, (800) 321-CSLB (2752), or write to us, at: P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, CA 95826, to request an application.